

Mark Wilt

Mark Wilt joined the PRT in August of 2007.



He has a fifteen year proven track record working with senior international development and corporate stakeholders to design and implement medium- to long-term development strategies. His international development career began as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Africa with later positions as Chief Administrative Officer for Save the Children in Somalia during the U.S.'s intervention and most recently as Senior Advisor to CARE USA's Executive Team.

In the private sector he has advised Senior and Executive Management of many large, international blue-chip corporations on their most pressing issues from strategy formulation to business development and growth. Mr. Wilt holds two Masters, one in Business Administration from Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC) in France and a second in International Affairs from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WASIT PROVINCE

Given the important role agriculture plays in Wasit Province's economy, the Wasit PRT has several initiatives specifically focused on agriculture and agribusiness. Knowing that almost every part of the long agricultural value-chain is broken in Iraq, the PRT believes that in order to make a difference in agriculture, a sustainable difference, each broken element must incrementally be fixed in order for the agricultural economy to begin to flourish.

To highlight this "farm to table" strategy, six (6) PRT's initiatives must be understood simultaneously. (1) The PRT has made selective seed and fertilizer distributions to augment supplies from the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that farmers have what they need in order to make a living. (2) To ensure that the farmer makes the most of every supply and improve their farming profitability, the PRT is launching a wide reaching, 1,000 student agricultural extension program in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture's Agricultural Extension Service. (3) Since many farming communities are without adequate irrigation, the PRT is partnering with the Ministry of Water Resources to ensure that extension participants have the water they need for their crops to flourish. (4) The PRT is launching a unique financial product for farmers that will make acquiring loans for farm equipment and other supplies much more affordable. (5) To retain locally the higher margins of higher value agribusiness products, the PRT is assessing local agri-processors and have identified a high-potential fruit and vegetable canning facilitator in Wasit for a potential USAID investment in the facility and in the fields. (6) And finally, to stimulate the downtown area and ensure that farm outputs have an outlet, the PRT in conjunction with the Provincial Council are building two large agricultural product markets this year. It is important to note that in each initiative, the PRT is partnering with relevant local authorities and leaders to achieve buy-in, partner participation, and funding to increase the probability that the benefits of these programs will continue to be realized long after the PRT's departure.